

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT
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TO :

DATE: 14 February 1957

FROM :

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SUBJECT: Comments on 25 January 1957 Memo from [REDACTED] on Specialized Library Needs of CIA

6g When the library decides not to catalog an item sent to them by us, some indication of why it is not to be catalogued should be indicated rather than stamping the item "not needed in the library." The analyst has no way of knowing whether it is not needed because it is a duplicate copy (in which case it would be a good idea to have the call number written on the first page) or if it was considered surplus because the library does not have a requirement on file for the subject and area covered by the book.

6g One of the major frustrations confronting the research analyst concerns the availability of reference materials in time to make proper use of them and in legible condition

Some specific examples of these problems are cited below:

a) On 7 May 1956 a copy of CIA-00-B-55196, dated August 1952 was requested on a RUSH priority. Either a loan or retention copy would be acceptable. The request (No. 596626) was marked EXPEDITE - Would like this morning. A call from the library indicated that the document was in Records Center and might take some time to get. It was received on 15 August - more than 3 months after the RUSH request.

b) Foreign Service Despatch 558 from Lisbon with enclosures was requested on 24 August 1956 and on 17 September 1956 a photoprint retention copy of pages 9, 10, 11 and Encl. No. 1 of Despatch was received. On the same day, the whole item was reordered. On 20 September the complete Despatch plus Encl. No. 1 was received, on 10 October the remainder of the request was received. (Getting the enclosure for an Air Attache Despatch usually takes even longer.

c) On 11 September 1956 a Foreign Service Despatch dated 13 April 1953 and an OIR (State) report dated 7 March 1952 were requested. On 25 September 1956 [REDACTED] dated 10 April 1953 was requested. All three were requested on an Urgent - Soonest Possible basis with specific comment that loan copies would be acceptable. On 17 January 1957 photocopies - retention - of all three requests were received.

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d) On 15 October 1956 a retention copy of an Air Intelligence Information Report dated 18 May 1956-D494054 was requested. Copy was received on 1 February 1957.

e) On 26 December 1956 a Foreign Service Despatch dated 10 June 1953 was requested. The urgency was expressed both verbally and on the request form. Copy was received 31 January 1957.

f) On 25 September 1956 IR 4626-55 Air Attache, Paris was requested. On 23 October 1956 the IR was received. It was just a cover sheet transmitting a publication along with the notation "Encl. not microfilmed." The library had taken the pains to give this one nine notations for coding but the analyst had to wait one month for the cover sheet and then initiate a new request for the enclosure.

7c

The Intelligence Subject Code is probably adequate for economic research but is not adequate for geographic research. The tape runs are usually unnecessarily long and include a high proportion of items which are not relevant but cannot be weeded out on the basis of the present code since the breakdown is only to country. This is the equivalent of listing only the heading petroleum and coding all references to any petroleum product, refinery or pipeline under that single number and leaving it to the researcher to sort out all of the items not wanted for a particular project. In practice, however, over a page in the code book is devoted to subheadings under petroleum. The magnitude of this problem grows when a geographer is analyzing the relationships of a petroleum complex straddling a border, he must consider a number of aspects of the subject petroleum and in each country rather than in just the two districts with which he is immediately concerned. The result is a tremendous job of hand sorting.

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Interlibrary loans. Interlibrary loans are handled in a very bureaucratic manner. A request for such a loan cannot be accepted until it has been processed by the Search Unit. While the idea behind such a unit is excellent, our experience with it has been one of frustrating delays and in the end a negative answer which confirms our opinion that the book is not in the CIA Library. An analyst does not request an interlibrary loan unless he has assured himself that it is not in our library and he has to wait for it.

10a

We have had a fairly large number of cases where the reproduced copy was illegible, and other cases where the reproduction was incomplete. It would seem that a screening process on the reproduction line should be able to eliminate these problems. In other cases the reproduction is marked poor copy. It is understood that the reproduction process is limited by the quality of the original, but if the researcher cannot read the reproduction copy it is of no use to him and some other means should be devised to make the document available even if it has to be retaining of the hard copy original in the Library.

- 10b To the analyst the important factor is not the number of seconds required to reproduce a document from a film that has been placed in the machine. He is concerned with the time lapse between his request and delivery of the document.
- 13 There should be some consideration, other than the date of the document, as a basis for retiring an item. In some cases the basic document on a particular subject is several years old. It remains the basic document because the situation remains the same or later documents merely supplement it.